

# News from Ed Markey

**United States Congress**

**Massachusetts Seventh District**

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## U.S. SUBMITS REPORT TO U.N. ON COMPLIANCE WITH TORTURE RULES

**WASHINGTON, DC-** After years of foot-dragging the Bush Administration will submit a report to the United Nations Committee Against Torture today detailing its compliance with the U.N. Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Yesterday, Congress passed the supplemental bill which included language first offered by Representative Ed Markey (D-MA) when the House approved the bill last month, which would prohibit funds included in the bill to be used to the contravention of legal obligations under the Convention Against Torture.

According to the Wall Street Journal, the U.S. report to the U.N. in Geneva is expected to address questions about U.S. compliance with the international treaty but remain silent on the practice known as extraordinary rendition of sending prisoners overseas to countries well-known to engage in torture.

“Given all of the pressure on the Bush Administration for its defense of the practice of ‘extraordinary rendition’ the world will be watching closely to see how the United States will explain its use of ‘diplomatic assurances’ to send suspects into the hands of the world’s worst known torturers like Syria and Uzbekistan,” said Representative Ed Markey, the author of H. R. 952, the Torture Outsourcing Prevention Act –a bill that would end the current practice of rendering prisoners to countries that have been determined by the U.S. State Department to be violators of the Convention Against Torture.

“Why is the Bush Administration so late in submitting this report? If this Administration can find the time to create detailed secret memos justifying the legality of torture and other forms of harsh treatment for prisoners, it can find the time to report on its compliance with the international convention on torture.

“Torture of any kind is unacceptable. The United States cannot redefine its way out of the requirements of the UN convention.

“Standing four square and unambiguously against torture is not only a treaty obligation, it is a moral obligation. I am working with other members of Congress to see that the Administration honors our commitment to reject torture in deeds as well as in words. This is not a game of semantics – how we address the issue of torture goes right to the heart of our standing in the world community,” said Representative Markey.

A September 2004 report to the United Nations General Assembly, the UN Special Rapporteur on torture expressed concern that reliance on diplomatic assurances is a “practice that is increasingly undermining the principle of non-refoulement” and observed that where torture is systematic, “the principle of non-refoulement must be strictly observed and diplomatic assurances should not be resorted to.

For more information on Representative Markey’s fight to end the practice of extra ordinary rendition check out: <http://www.house.gov/markey/>

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